Underground Streams:
A Micro-History of Hyperstition and Esoteric Resistance

EDMUND BERGER

I.

> "…which is the revolutionary path? Is there one? – To withdraw from the world market… or might it be to go in the opposite direction? To go further still, that is, in the movement of the market, of decoding and deterritorialization?" – Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus,* 1972[1]

The question is answered only by Lyotard with a resounding "yes" in favor of these destructive power powers. Following his predecessors' emphasis on a politics of desire, Lyotard transcribed the libidinal joy the workers found in their deconstruction into this decoding: the proletariat "enjoyed the mad destruction of their organic body which was indeed imposed upon them, they enjoyed the decomposition of their personal identity."[2] But he too would drop this line of thought, later castigating his works from this period as "evil," something for the philosophical dustbins.

These ruminations are the theoretical basis of "Accelerationism." A divisive issue, the #Accelerate Manifesto has gained rapid traction, while its earliest traces, generated in Sadie Plant and Nick Land's Cybernetics Culture Research Unit (CCRU) continues to trigger vitriolic reactions by its apparent celebration of capitalism's darkest compulsions. Deleuze and Guattari had observed that underneath capitalism's 'decoding of flows,' "desire itself becomes the death instinct... that carry the seeds of a new life."[3] Land collapsed this observation into Lyotard's own that capitalism exists due to the human libidinal drives; accelerating capitalism would then be a natural process of accelerating humanity's own compulsion towards death. Land's aim, most properly, is a technological market-system in runaway, outstripping its human components.

The "New Accelerationism," is instead an invocation many aspects of high modernism. The subtle overtures towards hierarchical organization stands in stark contrast to the highly networked, distributed, and horizontal ethos found in the postmodern era – be it in the affinity groups and direct democracy found in various activist movements, or the 'flattened bureaucracy' of many contemporary corporate forms. Aside from this, we have the allusions to technological self-mastery, evoking perhaps the proto-fascism of Italian Futurism. Unlike the Futurists, with their prioritization of speed and war as social drivers, the New Accelerationists cite examples such as Chilean CyberSyn project as the historical precedent to their own project – arguably part of the last socialist program of modernity prior to the birth of neoliberalism proper.

New Accelerationism breaks with the Landian variant, scrubbing from its rhetoric the thanatropic drives its predecessors celebrated, the fiery apocalypticism nowhere to be seen.
Instead, humanism and talk of management takes the place of inhumanism and dark, anarchic impulses. Land and the CCRU feverishly produced text after text blending cyberpunk and science-fiction, Lovecraftian horror, electronic dance music and distorted French theory into a systemic irrationality that appears far more chaotic than earlier philosophical movements. New Acceleration instead envisions a society organically organized by principles of rationality, mathematical prowess, and a bountiful cooperation between man and smart machines.

Both strands of Accelerationism can be deemed problematic for their varying degrees of complicity with neoliberal capitalism. The Landian strand, while presenting itself as anti-capitalist yet pro-market, embodies the drive to excess and destruction of the organic that marks neoliberal reality; the New Accelerationism, on the

other hand, appears as the idealized face of neoliberalism due to its positive valorization of harmonic rational management through the usage of cybernetic and information technologies. Yet through its removal of Land's own frantic excesses, New Accelerationism loses something fundamental to the ongoing critique of neoliberalism and along with it a whole host of dissident practices. This would be the conceptual force of hyperstition, an "Element of effective culture that makes itself real,"[4] - in other words, the ability for the *fictional* to manifest itself in the physical world.

Hyperstition was indicative of Land's intensification of chaos theory with chaos magick. Just as hyperstition looked to the ways that unreality could displace the continuity of the real, chaos magick emphasizes the subjective nature of perception and the ways that the plasticity of ideology can be manipulated and reconfigured. One example Land gives of this shifting paradigm is William Gibson's usage of what he dubbed "cyberspace" in novel *Neuromancer*. In the cyberpunk classic, cyberspace is a digital 'non-space', a "consensual hallucination"[5] that users can plug into and drift through the datastreams of an accelerated, runaway corporatism. For CCRU, Gibson's cyberspace helped call into being the internet as we know it today, even if it existed mainly in its militarized and state-dominated form when *Neuromancer* was written.

Elsewhere, Land describes capitalism as a force "extremely sensitive to hyperstition, where confidence acts as an effective tonic, and inversely."[6] This is particularly true of the finance markets, where early news reports and off-the-cuff interpretations can shape the movements of trade, and with it the entire monetary system. Speculative finance has made a home in this quasi-fictional web, utilizing these fluctuations of financial instruments to turn high-risk investments into profit gains. Other speculative modes of playing with market expectation and confidence has been defined as "positive-feedback trading," or the buying of securities when prices are high and the selling when they bottom-out. As described in a 1990 article by Larry Summers, among other economists, this process involves "Investment pools whose organizers buy stock, spread rumors, and then sell the stock slowly as positive feedback demand picks up rely on extrapolative expectations over a horizon of a few days."[7] Clearly, positive-feedback trading is contingent on the fostering of rumors in the context of the real, utilizing the cultural ferment of Wall Street to transform these abstractions into financial reward – with long term, overarching ramifications for the rest of the market. This reveals precisely the hyperstitional dimensions of finance markets: "Hyperstition," Land states, "is a positive feedback circuit including culture as a component. It can be defined as the experimental (techno-)science of self-fulfilling prophecies."[8]

The talk of positive-feedback, alongside the usage of advanced information technologies on the trading floors (ranging from the global connectability of the electronic marketplace to the 'black boxes' of the high-frequency traders) shows the debt that neoliberal capitalism holds to the boom in information sciences during and following World War 2, or what Philip Mirowski has called the "cyborg sciences" - cybernetics, communication theory, game theory, etc.[9] An example of this is the famous Black-Scholes model, the first formula for pricing options that enabled the rise of financial capitalism proper by importing the Wiener Process (named for the father of cybernetics, Norbert Wiener) into economic theory. Here we find hyperstitional attributes in that this borrowing from physics and computer science was presented as a 'universal law' in economics; what the model did was *conjure forth* a new paradigm for capitalism that presented itself as wholly rational and organic. Mirowski quotes Herbert Simon by describing the movement of these scientific constructs into economics as the "sciences of the artificial," noting the increasing inability and perhaps outright collapse of the distinction between the real and the mathematically-construed simulations of reality.[10]

We should take heed of Marx when he observed that "even as capital appropriates technology as the most effective form of the subsumption of labor," technology itself "is not 'identical with its existence as capital… and therefore does not follow that subsumption under the social relation of capital is the most appropriate and ultimate social relation of production for the application of machinery.'"[11] But Land was far more influenced by Fernand Braudel than Marx, relying on the former's distinction between markets, where goods circulate through horizontal networks, and capitalism, where structures like the corporation (and the state)

act as *anti-markets*. As Marx noted, capital constrained the application of technological innovation; synthesizing with Braudel, Land's position is that the acceleration of market circulation would then, presumably, unleash the latent forces within technology itself. From this perspective the binary of real/simulation matters not, for the feedbacking loops of hyperstition shows the constant movement between the two; it propels itself from economics and technology to an ontological plateau that is populated, for Land, by Gothic horrors and occult assemblages. From another angle, it charts the acceleration of markets and technology as resistance to the totalizing forces of capitalism.

This returns us to the key problem in Land's Accelerationism: to what degree, in the dually horizontal and vertical system of neoliberalism and hypercirculation of money as digital code, does the distinction between capitalism and markets offer alternatives? At what point does Accelerationism not actually oppose neoliberalism, but instead buttress the logic of capitalism by providing a science-fiction twist on libertarian ideology? Other theorists (Deleuze and Guattari, Tiqqun), have observed the importance of speed in resistance, while others (Virilio, Bifo, Tiqqun again) have emphasized deceleration; meanwhile, each of these stands sits uneasily between the false distinction between the alternatives of rampant neoliberalism and statist liberal social democracy dominates resistant imaginations. Tiziana Terranova writes that "the notion of a post-capitalist mode of existence must become believable,"[12] a statement that indicates the becoming-real of imaginative alternatives and looping us again back to the specter of hyperstition. In the debate over the Accelerationist tendency, hyperstition itself – and its historical progenitors – may have much to teach us, if for no other reason than its utilization of things that appear irrational, nonsensical, and anti-scientific as a weapon against the rationality of our neoliberal globe.

II.

If much of neoliberalism's rationalized logic is derived from the 'cyborg sciences', scrubbed largely from this picture is the far more nomadic, deterritorialized offerings that move precisely in the opposite direction. Andrew Pickering's *The Cybernetic Brain* stakes out a cartography at the intersection of cybernetic theory with the esoteric, and holds up the artists, revolutionaries, and mystics who dabbled in this hybridity as a counterpoint to those who took the information sciences into the worlds of the military-industrial complex, corporate management, and economics. Central to his story is the neuropsychologist William Grey Walter, whose 1953 book *The Living Brain* betrayed a deep fascination with "what one might call altered states and strange performances: dreams, visions, synesthesia, hallucination, hypnotic trance, extrasensory perception, the achievement of nirvana and the weird abilities of Eastern yogis and fakirs—'strange feats'...such as suspending breathing and the heartbeat and tolerating intense pain."[13] Among the cyberneticians, Grey Walter was not alone in this regard; Pickering describes these ruminations as the beginnings of a discourse on the technologies of the "non-modern self," an ontological paradigm of performativity that stands outside the traditional linearity of historical development.[14]

Influenced by Walter's book were the Beat writers William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin (the two would attempt to replicate the mystical experiences described in the book with their Dreamachine).[15] Most importantly for our current interests, however, is the fact that Burroughs is intimately linked to hyperstition by Land and the CCRU: "it was 'far from accidental' that Burroughs's equation of reality and fiction had been most widely embraced only in its negative aspect – as a variety of 'postmodern' ontological skepticism – rather than in its positive sense, as an investigation into the magical powers of incantation and manifestation: the efficacy of the virtual."[16] This deconstruction of the boundaries between reality and fiction emerges from the constant creation of contemporary realities radiating from Control. In *Naked Lunch* the archetype of Control is found in Dr. Benway, a "manipulator and co-ordinator of symbol systems, an expert on all phases of interrogation, brainwashing and control."[17] This Control emerges from within the sciences, be they technological, mathematical or linguistic (we should note that in neoliberalism each of these have become indivisible from one

another and from the market itself). In later works Control is linked to what Burroughs calls the “language virus,” the concept that words and languages operate in a viral fashion, moving from host to host infecting each, and in doing so sets the parameters on how the host views their reality.

Mark Hansen argues that much of this position was derived from information theory, observing that in *The Nova Express* the word virus is described in terms of its 'information content', spreading through the usage of communication technologies.[18] Others have noted the relationship between Burroughs' writings and those of the notorious occultist Aleister Crowley, who prefigured hyperstition by elucidating the complicated relationship between reality and fiction, and the ways in which language itself was a magickal force capable of transforming our perceptions of the world. For Crowley this paradigm was the result of a crushing conformity generated by prevalent forms of groupthink (confidence in progress, war, political and religious ideologies, and competition) and countered it with the anarchic maxim “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law!” In *The Place of Dead Roads*, Burroughs depicts an anti-Control revolutionary in the form of Hassan i Sabbah, the historic leader of the Persian *Hashshashin* (Assassins). Burroughs' Sabbah provides the hero of the novel with the dictum “Nothing is true, everything is permitted”, drawing on Crowley's law.[19] While Burroughs' books display the use of occult rituals based on those of Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO), there is also a curious historical connection: L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, had been initiated into Crowley's OTO by the rocket engineer Jack Parsons in 1945. Hubbard would not only blend Crowley's focus on the power of words and symbols with cybernetics and viral imagery,[20] but Burroughs himself would join Scientology in 1959 and begin interjecting these very ideas into his writings.[21]

Burroughs' revolutionary vision comes imbedded within the cut-up technique, a method of cutting up texts and splicing them together to reveal new methods and meanings within with the explicit goal of reorganizing reality. David Wells has argued that Burroughs viewed the cut-ups as a form of Scientology's practice of auditing – the 'clearing' of internalized sensations resulting from negative repetition of certain symbols within communication. While this may be true to a degree – fighting the control of communicable signs over the individual features prominently in both - Burroughs and Gysin were also clear about the roots of the cut-up within the avant-garde, tracing its origins to Lautreamont, who had extolled the virtues of plagiarism in his *Les Chants de Maldoror*, and then to the Dadaist Tristan Tzara, whose 1920 poem “To Make a Dadaist Poem” included instructions on cutting up newspaper articles, and pulling the words out of a hat at random.[22] Burroughs and Gysin drew further attention to literary history with their own cutting-up of the works of Arthur Rimbaud, who Nick Land would depict as a dark precursor to Accelerationism by quoting Georges Bataille: “Poetry leads from the known to the unknown.”[23]

Each of these figures and art movements maintained, alongside their drive to foment aesthetic revolution, murky ties to the world of the occult. Occult themes circulate through *Les Chants de Maldoror* alongside proto-surrealist stream of consciousness and appropriations from scientific texts, while Rimbaud's poetry is littered with references to alchemy and illuminated states reached through experimentation with a “derangement of the senses”[24](one of Rimbaud's mentors had been Charles Bretagne, a noted libertine and occultist[25]). Lautreamont and Rimbaud, in turn, bestowed a heavy bearing on the chaotic aesthetics of Dada, yet it has remained largely unacknowledged is the way that the Dadaists incorporated elements of the mystical and the esoteric into their art. Hugo Ball, for example, described Dada as a “return the innermost alchemy of the word”[26] (itself a reference to Rimbad's “Alchemy of the Word”, where the derangement of the senses is first spoken of), while Marcel Duchamp illustrated this clearly by bringing elements of the occult science into his works.[27] Tzara, meanwhile, was deeply fascinated by totemism.[28]

Lautremont, Rimbaud, and Dada: each would be distilled and reworked not only by Burroughs and Gysin, and also by the Situationist International, another motley consortium that dissolved the lines between the aesthetic and the political. While there is little need for us here to review the complex history of the Situationist movement and their nomadic relationship to the Parisian avant-garde and the events of May '68, it is worthwhile

to reflect on the similarities between their own theories of consumerist societies and Burroughs's understandings of Control. Just as our reality-fiction is predicated on the manipulation of the word itself, the Situationists pictured everyday life encased within the "Spectacle" – the accumulation of capital until it becomes image. In *Society of the Spectacle,* Guy Debord illustrates the role of language in evolution of the Spectacle: "The language of the spectacle consists of signs of the ruling production, which at the same time are the ultimate goal of this production."[29] Elsewhere, the poet Novalis is cited on the relationship between the word and despotism of contemporary state-form - "Writings are the thoughts of the State..."[30] Just as Burroughs's Control operated through communication technologies, it was along this same paths that the Situationist's Spectacle also propagated itself: "Spectators are linked only by a one-way relationship to the very center that maintains their isolation from one another."[31] And finally, as Burroughs's had connected Control to information theory, the Situationists also cast Spectacle in a similar language:

> This society's need to market objects, ideas, and model forms of behavior calls for a decoding centre where an instinctual profile of the consumer can be constructed to help in product design and improvement, and in the creation of new needs liable to increase consumption. Market research, motivation techniques, opinion polls, sociological surveys and structuralism may all be considered a part of this project... The cyberneticians can certainly supply the missing coordination and rationalization – if they are given the chance.[32]

While there exists these striking similarities between the two discourses, the modes of revolution urged by Burroughs and the Situationists may exist even closer together. Drawing directly on Lautreamont, many early Situationist writings focused on *detournement*, the poetic subversion of texts and images, appropriated and plagiarized from their original sources. The practice is a direct analogue to the cut-up technique; if the word and the image aid the singular message of the Spectacle, then the dissection of these arrangements and their reorganization can reveal new meanings. "...the main impact of a détournement is directly related to the conscious or semiconscious recollection of the original contexts of the elements."[33] Detournement fully the nonsensical – it is "less effective the more it approaches a rational reply." Importantly, the Black Mass is cited as a detournement par excellence, invoking perhaps the Situationist's own preoccupation with heretical Millenial sects.

Detournement eventually became become the more explicitly political "construction of Situations" - a temporary and collective space in everyday life where the rules and overcodes of the Spectacle can be overturned. Situations constituted openings in this world, and with their proliferation and critical mass a new world could come into being – one of direct democracy instead of liberalism, gift economies instead of capitalism, and free-form experimentation instead of the Spectacle. It bears several crucial resemblances to detournement and the cut-up by deploying the 'raw material' of the Spectacle itself to establish itself. They are non-organic, reflecting not a primordial state, but something that arises only through collective will. Situations were depicted as existing as a distributed network that would be linked via the same communication technologies that enabled the Spectacle: "the positive phase of the construction of situations will require a new application of reproductive technologies. One can envisage, for example, televised images of certain aspects of one situation being communicated live to people taking part in another situation somewhere else, thereby producing various modifications and interferences between the two."[34] The Situation is thus a *counter-Spectacle*, just as the cut-up was the creation of a counter-language.

The Situation is akin to the carnivalesque spoken of by Mikhail Baktin, a festive mode of subversion that hijacks the content of organizations of power and turns them inside out. Bakhtin foreshadowed the Situationist's theses by writing that the carnival "is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everybody participates because its very idea embraces all the people."[35] In one hyperstitional linkage, Bakhtin's own

analysis of the carnival revolves around the monk Rabelais, who satirized the monastic life with his writings on the mythical Abbey of Thelema's single code of conduct: "Do what thou wilt." This was, of course, Aleister Crowley's own maxim within his philosophical system "Thelema."

Given all these cross-pollination of ideas, its unsurprising that there is indeed a linkage between Burroughs and the Situationists. The connecting thread is Alexander Trocchi, an artist whose career oscillated between both the American Beats and the French militants. Trocchi conceived of a methodology of Situations he called *sigma* - "a process, without beginning or end, without subject or goal... something experienced in the lived time of everyday life."[36] Sigma resembled greatly the goals of chaos magick, described by Genesis P. Orridge as a "process of individual and collective experimentation with no finite answers, dogmas, or unchalleangeable truths" capable of "break[ing] Control at all levels."[37] Trocchi's sigma as was to contribute to a "spontaneous university... a vital laboratory for the creation... of conscious situations."[38] He maintained a close correspondence with Burroughs, inviting him – along with Allen Ginsberg and R.D. Laing, among others – to participate in the sigma project by serving as "directors" of this 'university.'[39] Debord, however, would expel Trocchi from the Situationist International; the sigma project would never materialize. Burroughs, however, remarked that the Situationists would be "an excellent outlet for the short pieces I am writing now."[40] These writings included *The Electronic Revolution*, where the cut-up technique is extended to the splicing and playback of tape records. Burroughs here speculated on the fomenting of dissent through sound, perhaps by playing audio recordings of a riot to create a riot[41] – a hyperstitional framework for turning fiction into reality.

III.

> [The Autonomists] used the Dadaist techniques of the collage, taking characters from the newspapers, cutting out pictures, mixing and sticking them to the page and then photographing and printing it all... Their reading was less tedious than that of their elders. They were reading not so much Marx and Lenin, but William Burroughs and Roland Barthes.[42]

It was the Italian Autonomia of the 1970s and their punkish, DIY attitude, who adapted Deleuze and Guattari's politics of desire to redirect Marxism towards something far more experiental than the Stalinist politics of their time and place. Alongside these was an aesthetic sensibility that was reached through an engagement with the history of the avant-garde and post-Situationist theory. Autonomist radio stations like Radio Alice and underground publications such as *A/Traverso*, used the cut-up technique as part of a "Mao-Dada" strategy –only Spectacles and Simulations could undo Spectacles and Simulations. Foreshadowing hyperstition, *A/Traverso* produced a text bearing the title "False Information Produces Real Events":

> Acting like a mirror, Radio Alice is language beyond the mirror. It has built a space in which the subject does not recognize himself as in a mirror, as restored truth, as fixed reproduction, but as the practice of an existence in becoming. And language is one of the levels whereby life is transformed. It is not enough to denounce power's lies, it is also necessary to denounce and break power's truth... False signs.[43]

Like the Situationists the Autonomia would engage with the tradition of the Carnivalesque alongside a Marxist political analysis. Bakhtin had described the carnival as "political drama without footlights," where the dividing line between "symbol and reality" was extremely vague,[44] and the Autonomia had embodied this approach through their media-oriented tactics of detournement. But under a regime of emergency laws a great portion of the Autonomia was sent to prison or into exile, leaving its legacy through an extensive network of radical punk and anarchist squats and social centers.

One such center was the Decoder collective, known for introducing politicized cyberpunk into Europe and providing translations of the magazine *RE/Search.*[45] Decoder was named for *Decoder*, a 1984 German film

produced by Klaus Maeck. With a cast of underground luminaries, appearances included Burroughs and Genesis P. Orridge of Throbbing Gristle and Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth. P. Orridge himself was a popular practitioner of chaos magick (Thee Temple's writings invoked shamanism, trance states, and ceremonial magic as "cosmic boosters" to mutate culture from within),[46] and following his introduction to the cut-up technique by Burroughs himself, incorporated it into music to body modification. *Decoder* itself revolved around Burrough's ideas, presenting the cutting-up of tape recordings as a means of revolt against dystopic corporatism. In one notable sequence these tapes are utilized to incite riots; the filmakers utilized footage of real riots against President Reagan during his visit to Germany. As Maeck recounts, their intent was to pass out recordings to the rioters, but they were already beaten to the punch: "we were more than surprised that our script became true before we even started... here were actually tapes spread around, distributed around the political circles, with the instruction to make further copies... and it worked!! At 11.00am you heard helicopters and shooting, although there were none."[47] He continues:

> I wanted to realize Burroughs' ideas and the techniques which he described in the 'Electronic Revolution', and in The Revised Boy Scout Manual and in The Job... From the 'Forward' of the Decoder Handbook: 'It's all about subliminal manipulation, through words, pictures and sound. It is the task of the pirates to understand these techniques and use them in their own intrest. To spread information is the task of all media. Media is power... And we should learn in time to use our video and tape recorders as Weapons. The fun will come by itself.'... my conclusion was similar to that of 'bands' like Throbbing Gristle; by turning around the motivation, by cutting up the sounds, by distorting them etc. one should be able to provoke different reactions. Make people puke instead of feeling well, make people disobey instead of following, provoke riots.[48]

Decoder (both the thinkers behind the film and the collective) soon became intertwined with the avant-garde network dedicated to "neoism," an eclectic anti-ideology that feverishly sampled cyberpunk, industrial culture, Dada, Fluxus, Mail Art, Situationism, chaos magick, Discordianism, and anarchism, with a focus on plagiarism and detournement. Like the Italian Autonomia, Neoism is fixed within the proto-hyperstition continuum by its adherence to the credo "false information will produce real events" - the networked culture utilized the tactic of 'open name,' (Monty Cantsin, Karen Eliot, and Luther Blissett, etc.) which were open to appropriation by artists and revolutionaries across Europe and America to conduct actions and interventions free from the constraints of individual subjectivities. Luther Blissett was prominent, particularly in the Italian post-Autonomist circles, and was blended with tactical media strategies to simultaneously evade and confound Control. These open names were connected to open groups – non-organizations free from structure and capable of being sent in any direction by those who deployed its moniker: the Association for Autonomous Astronauts, the London Psychogeographical Society, and the Workshop for Non-Linear Architecture, for examples.

The political dimensions of these open collectives derives from the work of George Sorel, who in 1907 had noted the role of the myth in mobilizing the masses to revolt against a contemporary order.[49] This hyperstition comes in the guise *mythopoesis*, and following the integration of the avant-garde into these political dimensions, it takes the form of *mythopoetics*. As Brian Holmes has observed, mythopoetics assumed a new primacy for dissent in the current, post-Fordism world of globalization: "The ideas sound fantastic, but the stakes are real: imagining a political subject within the virtual class, and therefore, within the economy of cultural production and intellectual property that had paralyzed the poetics of resistance."[50] Indeed, the circles utilizing Luther Blissett and the AAA intertwined with the alter-globalization movement that emerged after the Zapatista revolt in Chiapas, Mexico; the Tute Bianche, for example, were another 'open myth' that integrated themselves into the international circuits of the Carnivals Against Capitalism (which maintains its own lineage going back to the Situationists and the Autonomia) and a participant in the famous protests in 2001 against the G8 summit in

Genao.

If these segments veered directly into the political, other elements, centered around Stewart Home, redirected them back into the esoteric. Home, having had a series of festivals dedicated to plagiarism and attempts for general strikes against art production, established the Neoist Alliance in 1994 as an 'occult order,' complete with texts that became increasingly hermetic and conspiratorial, weaving a mythic worldview where dark forces led by Masonry embodied the power of bourgeois power and culture. In a text titled "Marx, Christ, and Satan United in Struggle," Dada and Situationism are recast as part of an occult underground lineage, led by "'secret chiefs'... based in Tibet"[51] - a nod to Crowley's writings alongside Theosophical philosophy. Elsewhere, the Alliance makes the claim that "Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism emerged at the precise moment Aleister Crowley was... [creating] 'High Magick' as we know it today",[52] while in another essay, Home states that the term "Neoism" itself came from a text by Crowley, and that "Like the Situationists, the Neoist Network drew heavily on the mythology of occult and secret societies."[53] This was clear in the case of the LPA, who linked political and monetary power to the existence of ley-lines and issued pamphles with titles like "Smash the Occult Establishment".[54]

IV.

Today organizations like the London-based Nanopolitics group have continued the tradition of blending anti-capitalist activism with the mystical. With the goal of creating a 'micropolitics of the body,' the group dabbles in collective therapy, shamanism and esoteric currents as an antidote to the overcoding of movement and subjectivity under the neoliberalism. They remain distant from the mythopoetic continuum, relying on instead on Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalytics, while noting that these concepts trend very closely to neoliberalism's own internal logic – the politics of desire is present within the functioning of today's order, albeit in a way that maximizes the extraction of surplus-value.[55] Even things like shamanism, animism, and other strands of esoterica reach their commodification in the New Age industry; Andrew Pickering observes that the early cybernetician's interest in a "non-modern self" laid the groundwork for this postmodern spirituality.[56] In their farcial tone, the Neoist Alliance linked New Ageism, those "shameless charlatans," to the fact that "world's top occultist are to be found among the ruling class".[57]

The hyperstitional nature of neoliberalism presents itself under the banner of rationalization, as indicated by borrowings from information theories and the hard sciences and its endless application of technological innovation, but it is at the moment that this rationality inserts itself that the irrational dually emerges: Chronic unemployment, the upward flow of money, environmental degradation, political corruption and systemic crises reveal this in full. That theories of chaos, complexity, and non-linearity underscore the functions of electronic markets indicate that the traditional framework of "rationality" is irrelevant. This question then becomes whether or not the forces of irrationality counter-act neoliberalism or simply mirror its own operations, much like Accelerationism itself.

The fact is that the seemingly irrational, the occult and the mystical, holds a strong, yet largely unacknowledged influence upon the current world. This short and cursory outline has touched on the various significant cultural and political uprisings that overlap with occultism, sometimes directly and other times at arm's length. We could cite Isaac Newton's interest in sacred geometry and Rosicrucianism, Robert Boyle's preoccupation with alchemy, and other numerous occassions in the foundations of modern science as indications that the oppositional relationship between the "rational" and the "irrational" itself is something in need of being overturned. George Sorel, in his work on myths, went so far as to assault science itself for its systematic rejection of the "chaos of reality." While new theories of self-organization largely overturns this statement, the role of science in reinforcing Control takes place on multiple levels: on one hand, it lends power a means through which to organize itself, while on the other, designating what constitutes "knowledge" and the paths to achieve it.

The difference between hyperstition-as-Control and hyperstition-as-Mutation lies in each's own relationship to *formal* notions of rationality. The assertion of neoliberalism-as-reality obtains, despites its requirements of speculation and the immaterial, a legitimacy through its appropriation of reason itself; mythopoetics, by contrast, evades notions of reason specifically through the *acceleration* of what at first glance is unreason, and through perpetuation by opening to any participant or movement, regardless of geographical location or even historial position. Organizations of Control certainly perpetuate themselves, yet it is through a specific modulation of the individual through a succession of enclosures that amounts to the setting of parameters on just what a subjectivity/body can do. Mythopoetics instead allow a process of subjectification through principles of autonomy. Concentrated enough, it can break into the "real", utilizing primarily the key functionary of the Spectacle: the media.

Going further still, hyperstition is configured by CCRU as a forceful presence from the outside that short-circuits the reason/unreason binary and lays the myth of rationality to waste; any hyperstitional feedback loop must contain a "call to the Old Ones," a nod to the unknowable cosmic entities found in the weird stories of Lovecraft. In our present moment the weirdness of the unknown presents itself in scientific revelations made possible by cutting-edge information technologies: the vast time-scales, existing beyond human comprehension, of the movements of geological strata, or the fluctuations on the cosmological level. This reorganization of our perception of time is matched in the world of capitalism itself by the black boxes of high-frequency traders, manipulators of the market largely free from human management, which operate at a much faster rate than their human counterparts on the trading form. The so-called occult dimensions of hyperstition, then, reveal that the games of the "media" are really an aspect existing on the side of a more potent force: that of technologically-enhanced communication technology, launching both time and space into schizoid bifurcations which reveal, ironically, the collapse of "communication" itself.

We could invoke the musings of Tiqqun on the 'Imaginary Party', "the heterogeneous ensemble of noises which proliferate beneath the Empire, without however reversing its unstable equilibrium, without modifying its state..."[58] For Tiqqun, Empire is the globalized system of Control, neoliberalism welded to despotic biopolitical fabrics; the Imaginary Party consists of those "elements which are impossible to assimilate" into the system.[59] Their roster of un-assimilated elements trails closely with the limit experiences invoked by the avant-garde and the occultists ("*Violence, excess, delirium, madness* characterize heterogeneous elements to varying degrees..."[60]). They render the Imaginary Party as the noise spoken of by the information theorists – the entropic forces that decay or obstruct the proper transmission and decoding of a message. In the first wave of cybernetics and communication studies, noise was presented as the Other, an adversary to be held at bay; for total information awareness of the tactical environment to be obtained, noise must be kept at a minimum and made manageable. Noise is a negative force within a controlled system, just as the Imaginary Party is the Empire in negative.

Yet is the functioning of the system not the endless circulation and accumulation of excess, made possible by the delirium of postmodern communication? Neoliberalism *is* the image of the rhizome, without beginning of end, a proliferating web of connections between plateaus of varying intensity. Late Deleuze seemed to acknowledge this, moving towards breakage and refusal. He stresses need for the need to create "vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers" as a tactic of anti-political political action.[61] In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari had described 'vacuoles' as the false lack created by the "dominant class" to power capitalism's engine.[62] Late Deleuze pivots and urges *lack* against capitalism *excess*, *non-communication* against the necessity of communication – in other words, Deleuze was, like Tiqqun, invoking the concept of noise in the entropic sense.

Noise is not emblematic of destruction; it is a sort of negative genesis, an unlikely moment of creation. Gregory Bateson argued that "All that is not information, not redundancy, not form and not restraints— is noise, the only possible source of *new patterns*."[63] Noise is the unpredictable, changing communication relays and

information feedback loop as an intrusion from the outside. Serres too approaches noise as such: "…order and flat repetition are in the vicinity of death. Noise nourishes a new order. Organization, life, and intelligent thought live between order and noise, between disorder and perfect harmony."[64] Noise does not have to literally point towards theses of spontaneous self-organization, the becoming-orderly of flux; this is a philosophy of systems and difference, where the excluded joins with the greater whole with the capability of transformation. Serres relates it to the *parasite*, that creature that turns over the laws of ownership by creating the means of subsistence into something held in common. It intrudes into the linearity of the host's existence like noise into the communication channel; it is heard in one way or another, and by interrupting the linearity it opens up to both the exterior world and to transformation. This is the hidden turn in Deleuze's vacoules of noncommunication, and in Tiqqun's Imaginary Party: to break into the circulations of communication, be it through strategic "non-communication" or through the clamor of those moving beneath the delirious exchanges of Empire. Serres' noise is the voice of the subalterns, the excluded, and the fringes, and it is through the principles identified in information that they make their voice heard, enter into – and change – the stable equilibrium of what they oppose.

With its dualing roots in modernity's avant-gardes and postmodern chaos magick, hyperstition holds commonalities with revolutionary movements in that both take sight of the world as it is, bound up in ideology and mystifications, and experiments wildly to establish an imagined reality. We cannot fall victim, however, to blind mystifications, for mystification and alterity is the promise the current system offers us. Capitalism, as a game of desire coupled with perpetually shifting technological terrains, embodies the becoming-real of nonexistent forms; it captures the powers of imagination to power cycles of consumption and production. What delirium or intoxication can the myth of revolution offer us that capital is not already willing to provide, at least to those in the so-called developed world? This is a profound danger in these waters, where the libidinal explosion of being-against becomes an end in itself, and dissent becomes the simple buying of temporary carnivals. The stakes are high, on social, economic, ecological, and subjective scales; if hyperstition is to be used, it must be pragmatic, designed with a horizon in mind and an expression of something beyond simple games. Instead of cataloging, let us read these things as a search for tools and weapons.

[1]Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari *.Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* Penguin Books, 1977, pgs. 239-240

[2]Jean-Francois Lyotard *Libidinal Economy* Athlone Press, 2004, pg. 109

[3]Deleuze and Guattari *Anti-Oedipus* pg. 223

[4]"syzygy" Cybernetic Culture Research Unit website http://web.archive.org/web/20130829063258/http://ccru.net/syzygy.htm

[5]William Gibson *Neuromancer* Ace Books, 2000 (reprint ed.), pg. 5, 51

[6]Delphi Carstens, Nick Land "Hyperstition: An Introduction" Merliquify, 2009, http://merliquify.com/

[7]J. Bradford, Andrei Shleifer, Lawrence Summers, and Robert J. Waldmann "Positive Feedback Investment Strategies and Destabilizing Rational Speculation" *The Journal of Finance,* Vol. XLV, No. 2, June 1990, pg. 383

[8]Carsten, Land "Hyperstition"

[9]See Philip Mirowski *Machine Dreams: How Economics Becomes a Cyborg Science* Cambridge University Press, 2002; as well as my own "'The SAGE Speaks of What He Sees': War Games and the New Spirit of Capitalism" *Deterritorial Investigations Unit* January 25th, 2014 http://deterritorialinvestigations.wordpress.com/2014/01/25/the-sage-speaks-of-what-he-sees-war-games-and-the-new-spirit-of-capitalism/

[10]Mirowski *Machine Dreams*, pg. 15

[11]Tiziana Terranova "Red Stack Attack! Algorithms, capital, and the automation of the common" http://quaderni.sanprecario.info/2014/02/red-stack-attack-algorithms-capital-and-the-automation-of-the-common-di-tiziana-terranova/; citing

[12]Ibid

[13]Andrew Pickering *The Cybernetic Brain: Sketches of Another Future* University of Chicago Press, 2011, pg. 73.

[14]Ibid, pgs. 13-28

[15] John Geiger *Chapel of Extreme Experience: A Short History of Stroboscopic Light and the Dream Machine* Soft Skull Press, 2003.

[16]"Lemurian Time War" Cybernetic Culture Research Unit website, http://web.archive.org/web/20120418105652/http://www.ccru.net/archive/burroughs.htm

[17]William S. Burroughs *Naked Lunch* Grove Press, 2009 (reprint edition) pg. 19

[18]Mark Hansen "Internal Resonance, or Three Steps Towards a Non-Viral Becoming" *Culture Machine*, Vol. 3, 2001, http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/429/446

[19] Ron Roberts "The High Priest and the Great Beast at *The Place of Dead Roads*" in Davis Schneiderman and Philip Walsh *Retaking the Universe: William S. Burroughs in the Age of Globalization* Pluto Press, 2004, pg. 231

[20] Hansen "Internal Resonance"

[21]David S. Wills *Scientologist! William S. Burroughs and the 'Weird Cult'* Beatdom Books, 2013

[22]William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin *The Third Mind* Viking Press, 1978

[23]Nick Land "Shamanic Nietzsche" in *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings, 1987-2007* Urbanomic, 2012, pg. 222

[24]Arthur Rimbaud, letter to Paul Demeny, March 15th, 1871, in Wallace Fowlie (trans.) *Rimbaud: Complete Works, Selected Letters* University of Chicago Press, 1966, pg. 307

[25] Gary Lachman *A Dark Muse: A History of the Occult* Thunder's Mouth Press, 2004, pg. 134

[26] Nadia Choucha *Surrealism and the Occult: Shamanism, Magic, Alchemy, and the Birth of an Artistic Movement* Destiny Books, 1992, pg. 40

[27] See John F. Moffitt *Alchemist of the Avant-Garde: The Case of Marcel Duchamp* State University of New York Press, 2003

[28] Katherine Conley *Surrealist Ghostliness* University of Nebraska Press, 2013, pgs. 10-12

[29] Guy Debord *Society of the Spectacle* Chapter 7 http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/debord/society.htm

[30] Ibid, Chapter 131

[31] Ibid, Chapter 29

[32] Raoul Vaneigem *The Revolution of Everyday Life* Rebel Press, 2006, pg. 136

[33] Guy Debord and Gil J. Wolman "A User's Guide to Detournement" http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/detourn.htm

[34] Guy Debord "Report on the Construction of Situations" June, 1957 http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/report.html

[35] Mikhail Bakhtin *Rabelias and his World* Indiana University Press, 1984, pg. 7
[36] McKenzie Wark *The Beach Beneath the Streets: The Everyday Life and Glorious Times of the Situationist International* Verso, 2011, pg. 130
[37] Peter Webb *Exploring Networked Worlds of Popular Music: Milieu Cultures* Routledge, 2007, pg. 83
[38] Timothy S. Murphy "Exposing the Reality Film: William S. Burroughs Among the Situationists" in Schneiderman and Walsh *Retaking the Universe* pg. 44
[39] Ibid, pgs. 30-32
[40] Ibid, pgs. 33-34
[41]William S. Burroughs *The Electronic Revolution*, Pociao's Book, 1998 pg. 13
[42]Franco "Bifo" Berardi *Precarious Rhapsody: Semiocapitalism and the Pathologies of Post-Alpha Generation* Autonomedia, 2009, pg. 20
[43]Cited in Marco Deseriis "Irony and the Politics of Composition in the Philosophy of Franco 'Bifo' Berardi" *Theory & Event* Vol. 15, Issue 4, 2012 http://www.e-flux.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/3.-Deseriis_theory_event_REV-1.pdf
[44] Cited in Gavin Grindon "Carnival against Capitalism: a comparison of Bakhtin, Vaneigem, and Bey" *Anarchist Studies* Vol. 12, Issue, 2, 2004 https://www.academia.edu/234514/Carnival_Against_Capital_A_Comparison_of_Bakhtin_Vaneigem_and_Bey
[45]Tatiana Bazzichelli *Networking: The Net as Artwork* Digital Aesthetics Research Center, 2008, pg. 71.
[46]Genesis Breyer P-Orridge *Thee Psychick Bible:Thee Apocryphal Scriptures ov Genesis Breyer P-Orridge and Thee Third Mind ov Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth* Feral House, 2010, pgs. 11-12.
[47] Jack Sargent "Interview with Klaus Maeck" http://decoder.cultd.net/interview.htm
[48] Ibid
[49]George Sorel, Letter to Daniel Halevy, in George Sorel *Reflections on Violence* Dover Publications, 2004, pgs. 26-56
[50]Brian Holmes *Unleashing the Collective Phantoms: Essays in Reverse Imagineering* Autonomedia, 2008, pg. 5
[51]Neoist Alliance "Marx, Christ, and Satan United in Struggle" in Stewart Home (ed.) *Mind Invaders:A Reader in Psychic Warfare, Cultural Sabotage, and Semiotic Terrorism* Serpent's Tail, 1997, pg. 114
[52]Neosit Alliance "The Grail Unveiled" in Ibid, pg. 67
[53]Stewart Home "Introduction to the Polish Edition of *The Assault on Culture*" in his *Neoism, Plagiarism, and Praxis* AK Press, 1995, pg. 198
[54]See London Psychogeographical Association "Nazi Occultists Seize Omphalos" and "Smash the Occult Establishment" in Home *Mind Invaders* pgs. 29-32, 36-38
[55] Nanopolitics Group *Nanopolitics Handbook* Minor Compositions, 2014, pg. 25
[56] Pickering *The Cybernetic Brain* pgs. 183, 302
[57]Neoist Alliance "Marx, Christ, Satan" *Mind Invaders*, pg. 111
[58]Tiqqun "The Cybernetic Hypothesis" http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/tiqqun-the-cybernetic-hypothesis
[59]Tiqqun *This Is Not A Program* Semiotext(e), 2011, pgs. 41-42
[60]Ibid, pg. 42
[61]Gilles Deleuze interview with Negri
[62] Deleuze and Guattari *Anti-Oedipus* pg. 28
[63]Gregory Bateson "The Cybernetic Explanation" *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind* University of Chicago Press, 2000
[64]Serres *The Parasite* John Hopkins University Press, 1982, pg. 127